

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

☐ Action Date:

☒ For Information Only

DEPARTMENTAL PERSONNEL MANUAL

DPM BULLETIN NO. 610-11

DATE: NOV 16 1989

SUBJECT: Emergency Closings in the Washington, D.C., Area

In preparation for the coming winter, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has reissued the attached plan for emergency dismissals in the Washington, D.C., area. The procedures are the same as those used for the last two years, except for the following clarifications:

- o The media announcements in paragraph 10 have been revised to include definitions of the terms "delayed arrival" and "liberal leave." There has been long-standing confusion on these two terms and it is requested that each personnel office provide definitions to employees.
- o Paragraphs 13 and 14b have been revised to clarify that agencies need not charge leave to employees who are exempted from authorized dismissal times to avoid hardships. This would include situations such as an employee's carpool driver being dismissed earlier or younger children being released early from school when no alternative forms of child care are available to the employee.

These procedures apply to all emergencies in the Washington area including snow storms, severe icing, floods, earthquakes, hurricanes, air pollution, power failures, interruption of public transportation, and any other situation where significant numbers of employees are prevented from reporting to work on time or where activities must be closed. The **Residential Zone Dismissal Plan** remains unchanged. In the case of an early dismissal, employees

Filing Instructions: File after FPM Chapter 610 Bulletins

~~**Bulletin Expires:** Upon Notification~~

Distribution: All FPM Subscribers in the Washington, D.C. area

OPI: M-16/GBATT/69448

are to be released according to where they live, not where they work. Employees who live the furthest from the city are to go home first.

Questions concerning these procedures may be directed to Mrs. Gail Batt of my staff on 366-9448.

for RP Brady
Director of Personnel

Attachments

WASHINGTON, D.C., AREA EMERGENCY DISMISSAL OR CLOSURE PROCEDURES

Introduction

1. The following guidelines are intended to coordinate decisions made by Federal agencies concerning group dismissals or closure of activities in emergency situations in the Washington, D.C., area. These guidelines apply to snow emergencies, severe icing conditions, floods, earthquakes, hurricanes, air pollution, power failures, interruption of public transportation, and other situations in which significant numbers of employees are prevented from reporting for work on time or which require agencies to close all or part of their activities. These procedures apply to all executive agencies (except the U.S. Postal Service) inside the Washington Capital Beltway. Facilities outside the Beltway may prefer to develop their own plans, since they normally are subject to different emergency and traffic conditions than those inside the Beltway.

2. The concentration of Federal workers in the Washington, D.C., area requires that any change in their work hours because of emergency conditions be coordinated carefully with municipal and regional officials to minimize disruption of the highway and transit systems. For this reason it is essential that, to the extent possible, Federal agencies in the metropolitan area comply with this area-wide plan and the announced decisions on dismissal or closure. Independent action by agencies should be avoided. Some agencies may need to exclude certain offices or activities--especially those in the outlying areas--from the plan. These agencies should notify the Office of Personnel Management of such exemptions and update such notices when necessary. Application of this guidance must be consistent with the provisions of applicable collective bargaining agreements or other controlling policies, authorities, and instructions. Nothing in this plan is intended to limit an agency's authority to grant or deny leave or manage its workforce.

OPM Responsibilities

3. In the Washington, D.C., area, the Office of Personnel Management is the Federal Government's point of contact with the municipal governments and regional organizations, such as the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (METRO). The designated official at OPM will consult with appropriate municipal and regional officials before a decision on closure, dismissal, or special leave treatment is made and will brief the Director of OPM on highway, transit, and emergency conditions.

Emergencies Before the Workday Begins

10. OPM will provide one of the following announcements to the media when an emergency occurs before the workday begins. Agencies must explain the meaning of these announcements to employees because this will not be included in the media announcements.

- a. "Federal agencies are open; employees are expected to report for work on time."

(Means Federal agencies will open on time, and employees are expected to report for work as scheduled.)

- b. "Federal agencies are operating under a delayed arrival policy; reasonable delays in reporting for work will be excused."

(Means Federal agencies will open on time, but reasonable delays in reporting for work will be excused without loss of pay or charge to leave for employees who experience serious commuting delays.)

- c. "Federal agencies are operating under a liberal leave policy; employees may take leave without prior approval."

(Means Federal agencies will open on time, but employees not designated as "essential" may take annual leave or leave without pay (LWOP) without the prior approval of their supervisors. Employees designated as "essential" are expected to report for work on time.)

- d. "Federal agencies are operating under a delayed arrival/liberal leave policy; reasonable delays in reporting for work will be excused, and employees may take leave without prior approval."

(Means Federal agencies will open on time, but reasonable delays in reporting for work will be excused without loss of pay or charge to leave for employees who experience serious commuting delays, and employees not designated as "essential" may take annual leave or LWOP without the prior approval of their supervisors. Employees designated as "essential" are expected to report for work on time.)

- e. "Federal agencies are closed."

(Means employees not designated as "essential" are excused from duty without loss of pay or charge to leave. Employees designated as "essential" are expected to report for work on time.)

11. In determining the amount of excused absence to grant employees who experience commuting delays, agencies should consider such factors as distance, availability and mode of transportation, and the success of other employees in similar situations.

the workday even if an employee was scheduled to take leave later in the day.

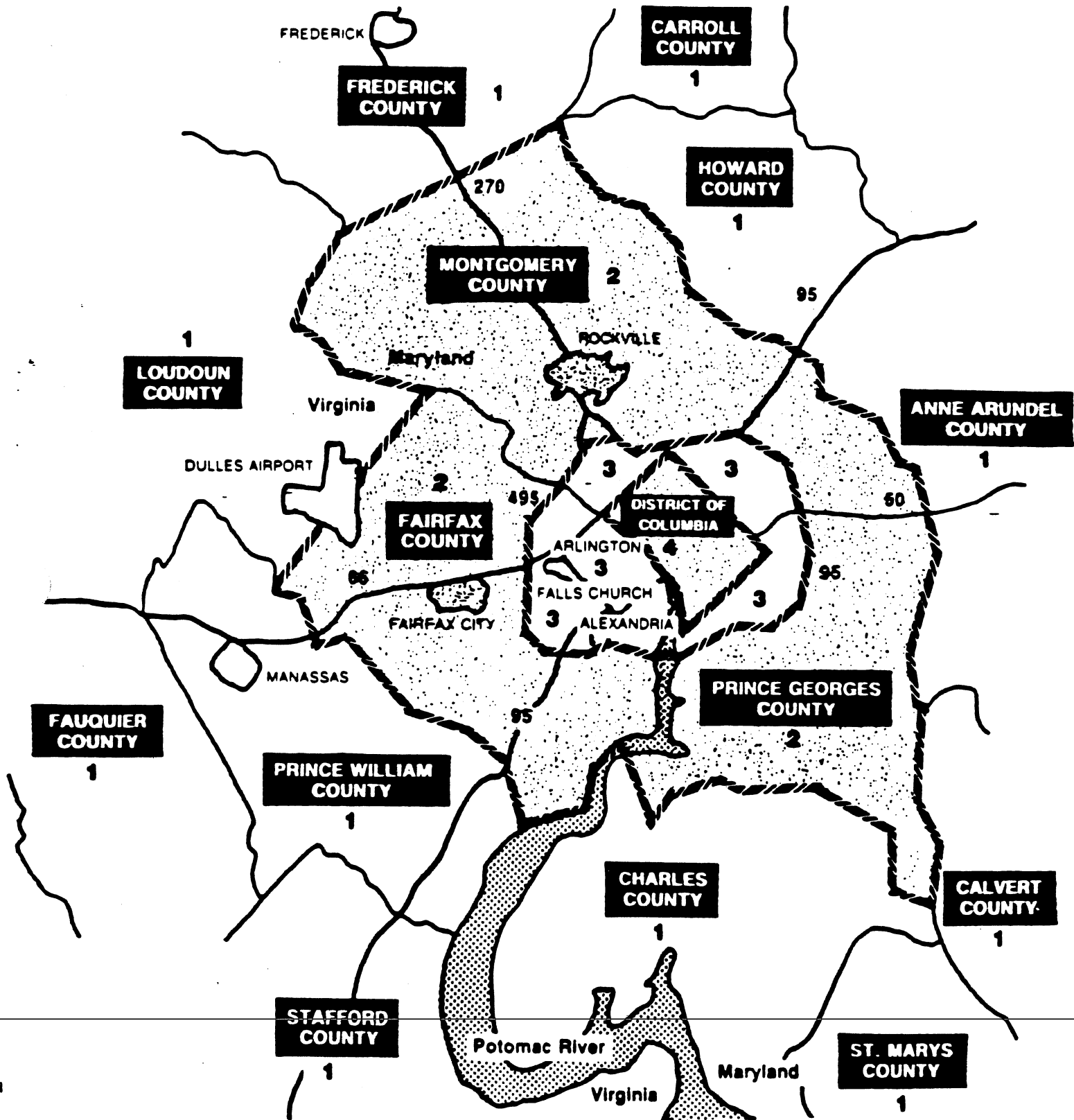
- b. When an employee leaves after receiving official word of the pending dismissal but before the time set for dismissal (with supervisory approval) in a situation not involving a hardship, the agency may charge leave for the period remaining before the employee's official departure time. When an employee leaves before official word of the pending dismissal is received, the agency should charge leave or AWOL (absence without leave), as appropriate, for the remainder of the workday.
- c. When an employee was scheduled to return from leave during the period of the dismissal, the agency should continue to charge leave for the absence until the time set for dismissal, then charge any continuing absence due to the emergency in the same manner as absences of other employees who were on duty at the time of dismissal--i.e., as an excused absence.
- d. When an employee was absent on previously approved annual leave, sick leave, or LWOP for the entire workday, the agency should continue to charge the employee leave for the entire workday.
- e. Normally, when an employee is scheduled to report for work before the dismissal, but fails to do so, the agency should charge annual leave, sick leave, or LWOP, as appropriate, for the entire workday. Exceptions to this policy should be made only in unusual circumstances.

Attachment

Council of Governments

Attachment

Residential Zone Dismissal Plan for the Washington Metropolitan Area



Numbers Represent Dismissal Stages